Pilot error led to miscue near Gap, military says

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FORT INDIANTOWN GAP • Blame the 900-pound skid that crashed into a West Hanover Twp., Dauphin County, back yard on pilot error.

In fact, call it co-pilot error.

On Dec. 8, a Maryland National Guard co-pilot reached for a toggle switch and brushed against the switch that dropped the skid out of the back of the C-130J cargo plane about 2½ miles west of its target at the Gap.

"There is an auto-release button," said Maryland Guard spokesman Lt. Col. Robert Gould, reading the results of the investigation. "The co-pilot made contact while reaching for another toggle switch. That resulted in the deployment. There was turbulence in the area and that would have contributed to it."